

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

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COUNTRY Rome: 170

DATE DIST.R. 24 Sep 1954

SUBJECT Advantageous Position of Rumanian Peasants over City People/List of Prices of Food and Other Items on Market and Black Market/Economic Situation in General/flourishing Black PLACE Market/Issuance of Visas for Departure from Rumania
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1. "The Rumanian peasants are in a better position than the city people, because they can sell their quota of farm products on the free market.
2. "Two months ago, [] the peasants also had food and clothing ration cards, but now these cards have been recalled by the government.
3. "Following are the prices charged for some foodstuffs and other items:
 - a. One kilogram of beef (which has not been made available to the public since the 1953 World Youth Festival) sells for 4 lei with ration card, 18-24 lei on the black market.
 - b. One kilogram of pork costs 25-28 lei.
 - c. One chicken costs 45-50 lei.
 - d. One liter of sunflower oil officially sells for 3.50 lei with ration card. It is made available to the public only rarely and in small amounts. On the black market it sells for 15 lei per liter and is not refined; refined oil, stolen from the cooperatives, sells for 25-35 lei per liter. Only once was olive oil sold; it was imported [] and sold for 32.50 lei per liter.
 - e. Domestic pressed butter is not available for sale. There is some kind of butter imported [] which is made available to the public from time to time at 21 lei per kilogram.
 - f. Lard (untura de porc) cannot be obtained with a ration card; it is sold on the black market at 40-60 lei per kilogram.
 - g. White cheese (branza alba) has not been on the market for a long time. The official price is 11 lei per kilogram. Homemade cheese (branza taraneasca) can be found on the free market at 24 lei per kilogram.

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2.

- h. Sugar; the official price of sugar is 3 lei per kilogram with ration card; the free market price is 25 lei.
- i. Rice is priced officially at 9 lei per kilogram, but it is unobtainable.
- j. Soap sells at 7 lei per kilogram with ration card and 11 lei per kilogram on the black market. Homemade soap sells on the free market for 18-20 lei per kilogram.
- k. Kidney beans are priced officially at 10 lei [per kilogram], but are unobtainable.
- l. Macaroni sells for 4 lei per kilogram with ration card, 6 lei on the free market.
- m. White flour sells for 4 lei per kilogram with ration card.
- n. White bread costs 3.25 lei for 600 grams.
- o. Coffee and tea are not obtainable with ration cards; on the black market they sell for 500 and 450 lei per kilogram, respectively.
- p. A standard, low-quality suit of clothes costs 274-350 lei with ration card, 500 lei on the black market.
- q. Shoes sell for 55-60 lei per pair with ration card, 500-700 lei on the black market.
- r. Shoe soles sell for 120-140 lei [per pair?] on the black market.
4. "The canneries are not working for the domestic market, but for export purposes.
5. "The black market is flourishing. One gram of gold sells for 60 lei. All the functionaries of (cooperatives) and state stores steal merchandise and sell it on the black market.
6. "This, then, is the country's economic situation. The people live in terrible poverty, and dissatisfaction increases continually.
7. "After a long time, the authorities have begun to issue visas for departure from Rumania.

The arrival of some known families is expected here, [in Istanbul] and we will have additional reports of interest."

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